

NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release
2007EDU0010-000068
Feb. 5, 2007

Ministry of Education

REPORT SHOWS CLASS SIZES REDUCED ACROSS THE PROVINCE

VICTORIA – The second annual report on class size shows average class sizes across the province are shrinking, Education Minister Shirley Bond announced today.

According to the report, class size averages were reduced in every school district this year, with more than 95 per cent of all classes having 30 or fewer students.

“The report shows that Bill 33 is working to reduce class sizes and create a better learning environment for our students,” said Bond. “All 60 school districts have complied with the legislation, and we will continue to monitor class sizes throughout the province and work with parents, students, teachers and school districts to ensure balanced class size and composition.”

The report shows there are only 85 classes in grades 4 to 7 this year with more than 30 students compared to 648 in 2005/06 – a decrease of 87 per cent. Under Bill 33, each grade 4-7 class with more than 30 students requires the consent of the classroom teacher.

The number of classes with students with four or more special needs decreased by almost 1,400 compared to last year. Bill 33 requires that the principal must consult with the classroom teacher for each class with more than three students with special needs.

School districts are required to submit a report on class size by Oct. 15 each year. The report includes information on the number of students at each grade level in each class, the number of students with special needs in each class and the number of ESL students.

“This government has taken a number of steps to address concerns about learning conditions, including putting firm limits in place on class size and composition,” said Bond. “It’s clear from this report that boards are adhering to those legislated limits. It’s also clear that there are more classes, teachers, librarians and special education assistants at the same time that there are fewer students.”

Government committed to an automatic review of the class-size and composition legislation by a special committee. The committee will be appointed within the year.

The report fulfils an election commitment to report annually on class size. Parents and students in every school in all 60 B.C. school districts have easy access to class-size information about their school.

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Government provides more than a half billion dollars a year in funding for students with special needs. The Province has increased overall funding for school boards this year by \$470 million. This represents the single largest increase in education funding ever. Since 2000-01, the Province has increased funding to B.C. public schools by nearly \$958 million: \$551 million in operating grants and \$407 million in one-time grants. During the same period, enrolment has declined by about 42,500 students and is projected to decline by another 30,000 students over the next five years.

Class-size information for all school districts is available under the school profile tool on the AchieveBC website at www.achievebc.ca online.

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1 factsheet(s) attached.

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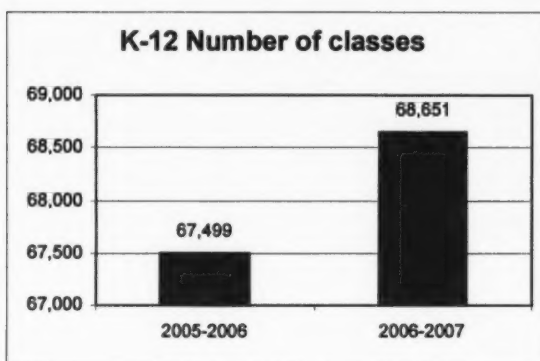
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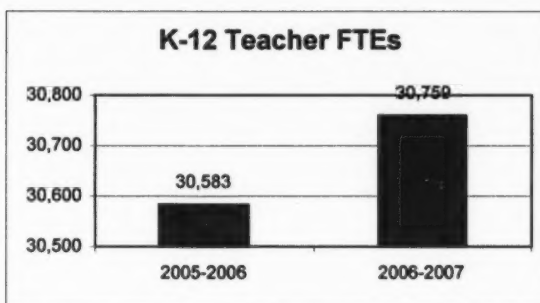
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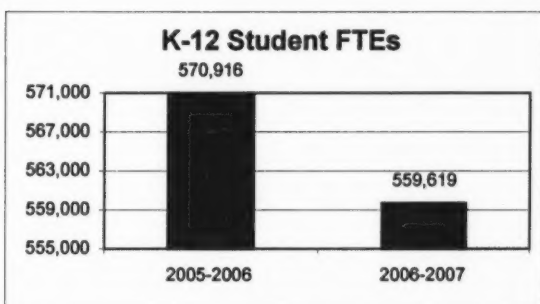
FACTS ON CLASS SIZE



- Increase in number of classes: 1,152.

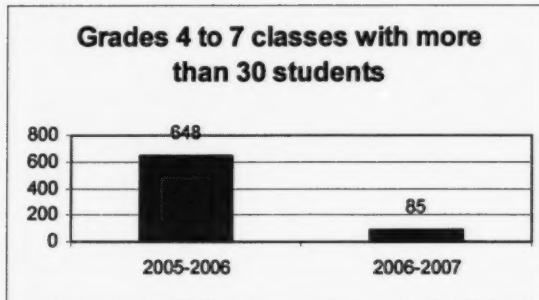


- Increase in number of teachers: 176.

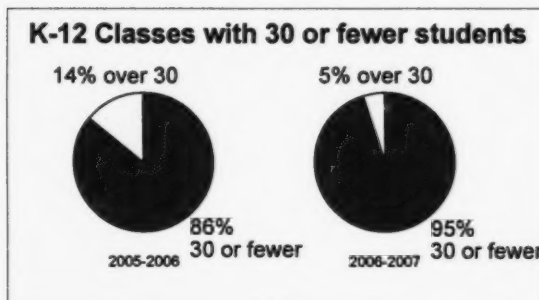


- Decrease in number of students: 11,297.

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- Decrease of 87 per cent.



- Classes with 30 or fewer students 2006/07: 65,408 (95 per cent of all classes). Classes with 30 or fewer students 2005/06: 58,246 (86 per cent of all classes). Increase in number of classes with 30 or fewer students: 7,162.
- Classes with 32 or fewer students 2006/07: 67,779 (99 per cent of all classes). Classes with 32 or fewer students 2005/06: 64,590 (96 per cent of all classes).
- Number of grade 8-12 classes with more than 30 students declined by 63 per cent this year compared to 2005-06.
- Classes with four or more students with special needs: 9,555 in 2006/07 compared to 10,942 in 2005/06.
- Average class sizes were reduced in all 60 school districts.

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